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ABSTRACT

This career exploration instructional booklet on the occupation of the social worker is one of several resulting from the rural southwestern Colorado CEPAC Project (Career Education Process of Attitude Change). Based on a job analysis and utilizing a programed instructional format, the following content is included: A brief description of what a social worker is; four questions asking for the appropriate courses of action in three simulated client situations encountered by social workers; and comprehensive answers to the questions so students can check their understanding of each job-related situation. The academic preparation needed by social workers and potential places for employment are briefly covered. (EM)

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S O C I A L W O R K E R

Occupational Simulation Kit

Career Education -
Process of Attitude Change

San Juan Basin Area

Vocational - Technical School

Cortez Colorado

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
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EDUCATION

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FOREWARD

This occupational simulation kit was prepared by Joy Brandt, Teacher at Dolores High School, Dolores, Colorado. The kit was the result of a job analysis and was developed based on the format by John D. Krumboltz as presented in the USOE Study Vocational Problem Solving Experiences for Stimulating Career Exploration and Interest. The CEPAC Career Education Project is a consortium in Southwestern Colorado administered through the SAn Juan Basin Area Vocational-Technical School including the school districts of: Dolores RE-4A, Dolores, Colorado; Mancos RE-6, Mancos, Colorado; Dolores County RE-1-J, Dove Creek, Colorado; San Juan County No.1, Silverton, Colorado; Egrar No. 18, Egnar, Colorado; Montezuma-Cortez RE-1, Cortez, Colorado; Bayfield 10Jt-R, Bayfield, Colorado.

The reader should note that the simulation kit may not be adaptable to all situations. This material has been reproduced so that others may benefit from the endeavors of the author and the Career Education Project.

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THIS COULD BE YOU

A former college athlete getting acquainted with members of an adolescent street gang, winning their trust and guiding them into constructive activity.

. . . . . HE IS A SOCIAL WORKER

A young woman guiding a troubled mother and father to understand and help their child grow in self-reliance and maturity.

. . . . . SHE IS A SOCIAL WORKER

A pair of newlyweds living in an urban ghetto, working in a medical center to help neighborhood citizens get a community health program and services underway.

. . . . . THEY ARE SOCIAL WORKERS

The point is HELPING PEOPLE!

What is a social worker?

A social worker is a professional helper or caseworker, and his job makes up a family of jobs dedicated to helping people.

The people who need help are the poor, the sick, the elderly, the handicapped; children of poverty and of broken homes and children who are physically or emotionally ill; delinquent youth and released prisoners; families in need of counseling or other aid to keep them together.

People who work for a living--and pay taxes--frequently find it difficult to understand those who do not.

. . . . . WOULD YOU UNDERSTAND?

DO YOU LIKE PEOPLE? . . . . . .

A professional helper or caseworker must like people!

He must be equipped with certain basic tools in order to effectively do the job. Personality-wise he must be warm, kind, friendly, understanding, accepting, sensitive and perceptive to the feelings of others.

He must be able to motivate and inspire confidence and trust and have some ability to work effectively with individuals and groups.

He should understand himself; his own strengths and weaknesses and how he uses himself in his relationship with others.

He should know the agency that he works for. Its rules and regulations, as well as the community and its resources.

Tom Davies is a social worker.
What would you do in Tom's place?

"A chance', that was one thing her family had never had, Mrs. Collins told Tom Davies the day she came to the family counseling service. Mr. Collins had deserted her and their four small boys some years before, and the family was supported by public welfare under the Aid to Families with Dependent Children Program. Now, Mrs. Collins said, her oldest boy, Jack, had been sentenced to a reformatory for drug addiction and "pushing," and, despite all her pleas, the two youngest boys had dropped out of school and were picking up with their older brother's former street buddies. She wept as she said, "I just don't want them to follow Jack to jail."

One son was not in trouble. This was Jim, the second oldest, who wanted to go to college. "How can he think of such a thing?", asked Mrs. Collins. None of the family had gone beyond the sixth grade.

What would you do about Jim?

Explain to Jim that it was his responsibility to get a good job and provide for his younger brothers since they had no father to care for them.

Hold conferences with the boy's teachers and the high-school guidance counselor to find out if Jim had the scholastic ability to go on to college.

Tell Mrs. Collins that she shouldn't worry about Jim because she should concentrate on the younger boys, and Jim can take care of himself.

From conferences with the teachers and guidance counselor, Tom Davies learned that Jim had scholastic ability. Mrs. Collins, amazed to hear that Jim might be able to earn a scholarship to college, agreed to let him transfer to a college prep course. The next year, accepted at the state university on a full scholarship, Jim got a summer job to pay clothes, books, etc. He is doing well in his college studies.

What would you do with the two

younger boys?

Place them in a good foster home to get them out of a bad environment.

Tell Mrs. Collins that she will have to keep a closer watch on the boys and give them other things to do so they won't have time to be out on the street.

Enroll them in a work-study program and continue to see them on a regular basis.

Tom Davies got the two younger boys to enroll in a work-study program of the local antipoverty agency and continued to see them both regularly. As they talked out some of their feelings and problems with him, Tom could see that much of the boy's behavior stemmed from their bewilderment at the absence of a responsible adult male they could look up to.

They had found their oldest brother's tough-guy role more colorful and enticing than their quieter brother's studious ways.

As Tom continued to offer them friendship and his own example of mature behavior, the boys began to pattern their attitudes on his and to want to follow their college brother instead of the oldest brother.

Joan Gannet is a social worker.

What would you do in Joan's place?

There is a group of ten girls, 15 to 19 years old, who call themselves "The Swingers". In the town where they live there are no youth centers for teen dances, parties, and projects; except for boys' sports, the parks and recreation department is not geared to teen activities.

The girls are drifting into a partly sexual, partly drug-experimenting relationship with a boy's gang in the neighborhood.

There has been no trouble with the police yet, but the girls are afraid they are "getting in awful deep," as one of the girls put it.

What would you do?

Find a meeting room where the girls can go together and plan constructive projects.

Talk to the juvenile court officers so they can watch the teenagers of the community more closely.

Go to the parents and tell them what is happening so they can do something about it.

Joan succeeded in getting a church meeting room where the girls can study together, prepare snacks, and hold dances and parties.

At their weekly Swingers club meetings with Joan they talk about their future careers and occupations and openly discuss their feelings and fears about boy-girl relationships.

As Joan sees the group develop and grow over the months, she knows that some of these girls, once on the verge of delinquency, are now moving with confidence toward maturity and satisfying adult lives.

Ellen Johnson is a social worker. What would you do in Ellen's place?

Medical men today are more interested than they used to be in the social and emotional factors that affect a patient's illness.

Ten-year-old Frank had been sent to the hospital by his school nurse, who was concerned about his hearing. Frank said he heard very little, and his parents agreed that his hearing was poor.

The doctor could find no physical reason for a hearing loss and the audiologist who tested Frank found that he heard a good deal better than he was willing to admit.

When the doctor gave his report to the boy's parents, instead of being pleased they were very angry. That was when he sent them to Ellen Johnson.

What would you do?

Tell his parents that they should be happy to find out their son could hear well.

Talk to Frank and explain how upset his parents are so that he will admit that he can hear as well as the other boys in his room at school.

Ask the parents for permission to have psychological testing done to find out why Frank is lying about his hearing.

The parents were still upset, but they agreed to send Frank for psychological tests.

From the tests, and from talking with Frank and his parents again, Ellen saw what had happened. Frank was slow in school, but his father couldn't face the fact. Each time the boy brought home a poor report card he was punished; each time he was punished he became more frightened, and less able to learn. Finally, he retreated into the "deafness" that his father could accept as a reason for difficulties in school.

Now the parents are beginning to look at Frank's good qualities too. They have visited with the social worker weekly and they are thinking about sending Frank to a school that can give him the special help he needs.

Assuming that, through education, training and experience, you had acquired the knowledge and skill, do you think you would enjoy working as closely and as intensely with people as the social workers on the preceding pages?

Many of the cases the social worker handles do not end happily. Do you think you could also cope with failure?

If you answer yes to both questions, than a career in social work may be a good choice for you. Basically, that is what social work is all about----------

WORKING WITH PEOPLE

Preparation Needed . . . . . .

Minimum for professional workers:

Four years of college plus two years of work at accredited graduate school of social work leading to master's degree.

Minimum for nonprofessional workers:

Four years of college leading to bachelor's degree with social-work background.

Categories of Social Work . . . .

Casework

Group Work

Community organizing

Where the jobs are . . . . . .

Casework:

Family service agencies

Public assistance

Public child-welfare agencies

Public school systems

Probation and parole services

Hospitals and other medical facilities

Group Work:

Group service agencies

Hospitals

Schools

Settlement houses

Community organizing:

Settlement houses

Institutions

Community Centers

Peace Corps, Job Corps, VISTA and other organizations

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